

## Biswa Ijtema

**FROM PAGE 1**  
A total of 800 Rab personnel would work round the clock dividing the venue into five sectors.

Several mobile courts and bomb disposal units from the army and Rab and plain clothed law enforcers will also be at the venue.

Police Superintendent of Gazipur Abdul Baten told The Daily Star that over 10,000 police would be deployed in and around the Ijtema ground while 48 CCTVs and 30 video cameras had been installed at different strategic points.

Major Masud Parvez, chief of the control room of the Ijtema security said helicopters, speedboats and motorised vehicles would be operative to ensure security.

Police and Rab sources said the law enforcers would search the devotees at five checkpoints.

More than two million devotees from across the country and world are expected to be at the Ijtema ground, a five-square kilometre area on the Turag.

Organisers' sources said more than 400 devotees from India, Pakistan, Maldives, Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi, Malaysia, America and Philippine have already reached the Ijtema ground.

Meanwhile, the organisers have divided the Ijtema

ground into 31 khittas and set up 50 medical teams. BRTC shuttle bus service and 44 special trains will be accommodated for the devotees.

**TRAFFIC RESTRICTION**  
The authorities have imposed restrictions on vehicular movement on several routes in and around the city for 24 hours from Friday 6:00pm for Ijtema.

These roads include Pragati Sarani crossing to Tongi-Gazipur crossing, Abdullahpur-Ashulia-Baipai crossing road, Mirpur road-Beribadh, Mirpur Zoo-Beribadh and Pallabi Eastern Housing-Beribadh road.

Ghorashal-Markul road via Kaliganj-Pubail will remain open to traffic during the period.

Vehicles heading towards Dhaka from Ghorashal have been asked to use Kanchpurnatrabari road.

All vehicles except for emergency services, Uttara residents, air-passengers and crew have been asked to take Mirpur-Savar road as an alternative to New Airport Road.

Devotees reaching on foot will have to use Airport Golchattar-Azampur-Abdullahpur road and seven Bailey bridges set up on the Turag and Kamranga Bridge, avoiding Tongi Bridge.

## Ministers talk

**FROM PAGE 16**

The government representatives at the meeting wanted to know from the villagers how they expected to be rehabilitated and compensated.

They decided to form a committee with two representatives from each village adjacent to the Barapukuria mine. There are more than 15 villages around the mine.

"Such a meeting is, in fact, first of its kind as far as coal-mine and rehabilitation issues are concerned which shows government's sensitivity to public sufferings caused by a large project implementation," said a source.

Earlier, on January 20 the government formed a committee to probe into the reasons for land subsidence in the Barapukuria coalmine area.

Given the committee's recommendation the government will compensate soon-to-be displaced and affected people by the coalmine project.

The committee was formed following a news report in The Daily Star on January 18 that about 4.2 square km area of the underground coal mine site will eventually subside up to a maximum depth of two meters in the mine's 30 years lifetime.

Though land subsidence is a natural byproduct of underground mining, this issue was omitted in the planning and approval of the coal-mining project in the early nineties under Khaleda Zia's rule.

As the environmental hazard and relocation issues were put aside in the project it did not have any budget to address them.

Newspapers have regularly run the reports on land subsidence in the mining area since 2006.

## 3 JS seats

**FROM PAGE 16**

Awami League (AL) candidate Abdul Latif Biswas (now minister) was declared elected for the seat.

Counsel for the petitioners Ahsanur Rahman told The Daily Star that the petitions filed with the HC election tribunals will come up for hearing soon.

ASM Feroz Alam, independent candidate, in his petition said that his rival (AL candidate) ASM Feroz, who won the election, is a rent and bill defaulter, and an accused in a criminal case.

On December 3 last, the returning officer concerned cancelled the candidature of ASM Feroz on these grounds, but the Election Commission on December 10 permitted him to contest the election, he said.

The petitioner said had ASM Feroz not been allowed to contest the polls, he (ASM Feroz Alam) would have got AL nomination and would win the polls.

In his petition, independent candidate Mamunur Rashid Kiron said his rival BNP candidate Barkatullah Bulu won the election in Noakhali-3 constituency by resorting to various illegal practices.

Supporters of Bulu intimidated people who wanted to vote for him (Mamunur) and created panic at polling centres, he alleged.

Mamunur claimed if the election was free and fair, he would have won it.

Jatiya Party's Brig Gen (retd) Kazi Mahmud Hossain stated in his petition that he wanted to contest the polls as AL-led grand alliance nominee for Narsingdi-4 constituency, but the EC did not allocate any symbol for him.

AL candidate Nurul Majid Mahmud won the polls in this constituency.

Manzur Quader in his petition sought HC directives for recounting the votes cast and declaring him (petitioner) elected.

He mentioned that 1,689 votes were cancelled in his constituency.

And he would have won the polls race if these votes were not cancelled, he claimed.

## 3 whips

**FROM PAGE 16**

18. The locals however rescued the girl and kept her in a neighbouring house as they tried to violate her.

In a desperate bid to catch the girl, the young men raided the house and wounded three women who tried to protect the girl. One of them Nasima, 30, was admitted to Vedergan Health Complex.

Later, the issue rolled up to the Barapukuria officer who ordered police to take action.

Meanwhile, the village elders at the behest of parents of the culprits met at 11 am yesterday and settled the case.

Jamila, a meritorious student, said she came from Kachikita union across the river Padma and used to stay in a house to continue her study.

## UZ complaints

**FROM PAGE 1**

Office yesterday, Election Commissioner Muhammed Sohul Hussain said, "The EC will not entertain complaints regarding the upazila parishad elections which are still coming to the commission."

"The complainants can now file cases with the election tribunals in the districts 30 days into publication of the gazette on the upazila election results."

The gazette will be published in a couple of days, Sohul said.

Replying to a question, he said the election was held successfully in 90 percent cases.

Meanwhile, BNP Office Secretary Rizvi Ahmed yesterday submitted to the office of the Chief Election Commissioner complaints of irregularities, violence and intimidation of voters by ruling party men during the polling in eight upazilas.

Talking to journalists the EC Secretariat, Rizvi said they have specific allegations about polling in the eight upazilas, and a huge number of such allegations are coming to them from across the country.

He demanded re-election and re-counting of votes in the eight upazilas.

The eight upazilas are Sharishabari in Jamalpur, Jamalpur Sadar, Fatikchhari in Chittagong, Birganj in Dinajpur, Bawali in Patakhali, Madaripur Sadar, Moreganj in Bagerhat and Comilla Sadar.

On judicial inquiry into polling in 13 upazilas including the seven with their poll

results suspended, Sohul Hussain said the district judge concerned will head each inquiry committee.

The EC on Tuesday suspended the results of polling in seven upazilas, which include Banchharampur in Brahmanbaria, Araihazar in Narayanganj, Teknaf in Cox's Bazar, Kaliganj of Gazipur, Mehendiganj of Barisal, Muradnagar of Comilla and Raipura in Narsingdi-

on grounds of massive irregularities in the elections.

Earlier, the EC had suspended polling in six other upazilas due to similar allegations, which will also be investigated.

Replying to a query, Sohul said there has been no tug of war between the EC and the government centring upazila elections.

Asked if there was a change in the attitude of the administration during the upazila polls compared to that during the national elections, the election commissioner said due to the changed situation, possibly the administration has changed to a little extent.

On the High Court rules on Jamaat registration with the EC, Sohul said, "It is a sub judice matter. We'll tell the court on which principles we allowed registration."

**CORRECTION**

In our yesterday's issue, the headline of the story on upazila election -- "Poll results of seven upazilas cancelled" --

was not correct. In fact, the results of the seven upazilas were suspended which was mentioned rightly in the story.

## 7 students

**FROM PAGE 16**

University Journalists' Association alleged that police beat up its president Golam Mostofa and Mamun Hossain of daily Jai Jai Din as they tried to enter the campus at about 10:30am.

In protest against the incident, the association formed a human chain for one hour at the Central Shaheed Minar.

When contacted, Abdul Maleq, deputy commissioner of Lalbagh zone, however, denied the allegation.

Jagannath University authorities closed the university sine die on Tuesday following three-hour-long clashes between students and police that left at least 100 people injured.

The clash took place when police resisted the students who had been carrying out movement to return their 12 dormitories grabbed by the criminals, policemen and Dhaka City Corporation.

## SC upholds

**FROM PAGE 16**

petition, DU counsel Advocate AFM Mesbahuddin told the court that the academic committees of DU have jurisdictions to make new rules regarding the admission to its departments and the HC can't interfere in this regard.

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He prayed to the court to stay the HC verdict.

**Petitioners' counsel**

Barrister Abdur Razzaq opposed the DU application saying that if the HC judgement is stayed, the writ petitioners and other Aleem students who passed in the admission tests can't get admitted into the university on time.

Upon a writ petition filed by five DU admission seekers, including Ibrahim Khalkil, who secured GPA-5 in Aleem examination under the Madrasa Education Board, the HC on January 20, declared illegal the new admission rules of DU's seven departments - Economics, English, Bangla, Mass Communication and Journalism, International Relations, Women and Gender Studies, and Linguistics.

The HC also observed that the Madrasa Education Board should consider revising its syllabus to meet the prerequisites for admission to general academic courses.

## Huda

**FROM PAGE 16**

granted regular bail in this case.

Petitioner's lawyer advocate Sigma Huda told The Daily Star that with yesterday's one, Nazmul Huda secured bail in all 20 criminal cases against him and there is no legal bar on releasing him from jail.

The ACC filed a case against Nazmul Huda and his wife Sigma Huda with Motijheel police station on June 18 last year, on charge of taking bribes from a company Marga Net One in the name of publishing advertisements in their weekly magazine Khobor Antor from September 30, 2004, to October 18, 2006.

Nazmul Huda was earlier sentenced to a total of 25 years' imprisonment in a corruption case and two extortion cases filed by the ACC.

But the Washington-based group fled Myanmar about a month ago to escape poverty and persecution, and that the Myanmar navy intercepted their vessel as it sailed south toward Thailand. He said soldiers from four boats boarded their vessel with wooden and metal rods and beat them.

"They told us there are no Muslims in Burma, and they continued to beat us," he said. The migrants were detained for 10 days and then let go. "They told us not to come back again, or they'll shoot us all."

Tens of thousands of Rohingya live in camps in Bangladesh, where many have been granted refugee status. Many more brave the seas in search of a better life. One of the most popular migration routes has been by boat from Bangladesh or Myanmar to Thailand then overland to Malaysia.

While answering to another query, she told the House that she talked to the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) chairman about how the Uttara EPZ and other industries can resume production.

The premier also said her government will ensure that fertiliser, seeds and other agricultural implements are available to the farmers.

The pickup van carrying the body of my uncle from Dhaka Medical College Hospital reached Paturia ferry ghat at about 10:00pm Tuesday to go to our village home in Madaripur but we could not cross the river yet," Sajeda Begum said while talking to The Daily Star yesterday morning.

## Obama's envoy

**FROM PAGE 16**

He thanked Egypt for its efforts to turn into a lasting truce separate ceasefires Israel and Hamas declared January 18 after a devastating war and said Washington was "committed to vigorously pursuing lasting peace and stability in the region."

"The decision by President Obama to dispatch me to come to this region less than one week after his inauguration is clear and tangible evidence of this commitment," Mitchell said.

He arrived in Egypt on Tuesday amid the deadliest flare-up near Gaza since the fighting halted Israel's 22-day campaign on the Islamists' stronghold.

Palestinian militants killed an Israeli soldier near the border early Tuesday and Israel retaliated with gunfire that left one man dead, an air strike that wounded three and bombing raids over border smuggling tunnels.

Senior Israeli officials, campaigning for February 10 parliamentary elections, vowed that the Jewish state would hit back hard for the attack.

"The army's reaction today was not only operational. This was not the response to the killing of a soldier... Israel's response shall come," a senior government official quoted Prime Minister Ehud Olmert as saying.

For his part, government spokesman Mark Regev said: "In the face of such violent provocation, Israel will act to protect itself."

Meanwhile, Defence Minister Ehud Barak cancelled his departure to the United States, which had been due later Wednesday, because of the violence, a ministry official said.

Barak decided to cancel his trip to the United States during which he planned to meet his US counterpart Barrister Abdur Razzaq.

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## Illegal Migrants

**FROM PAGE 16**

Muslim ethnic group who fled persecution in Myanmar, also known as Burma was highlighted earlier this month following accusations that some of them had been abused by Thai authorities.

Human rights groups say the Thai navy has twice intercepted boats filled with hundreds of Rohingya from Bangladesh and abandoned them at sea, where hundreds of thousands of people have been stranded at sea.

Thai authorities have repeatedly denied wrongdoing, insisting they only detain and repatriate people entering the country illegally.

"There is no reasonable ground to believe that these illegal migrants fled from their country of origin for well-founded fear of being persecuted," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Thailand faces an "enormous burden" because of 3 million illegal migrants currently in the country, the ministry said, and "cannot afford to be a country of destination" for illegal aliens.

But the Washington-based group fled Myanmar about a month ago to escape poverty and persecution, and that the Myanmar navy intercepted their vessel as it sailed south toward Thailand. He said soldiers from four boats boarded their vessel with wooden and metal rods and beat them.